

Message Text

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SUBJ :SAG ANNOUNCES CONCESSIONS FOR URBAN AFRICANS

REF :CAPE TOWN A-13, JANUARY 30,1975

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. SAG HAS ANNOUNCED ITS INTENTION TO GIVE
LEASEHOLD RIGHTS TO URBAN AFRICANS AND ACCORD CERTAIN
IMPROVEMENTS TO STATUS OF BLACK TRADERS AND PROFESSIONAL
PERSONS WHO WORK IN URBAN AREAS. THESE CONCESSIONS GENERALLY
APPROVED BY OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES AND BY THOSE FEW
BLACKS WHO HAVE COMMENTED TO PRESS. CONCESSIONS REPRESENT

PROGRESS IN IMPROVING RACE RELATIONS BUT ARE LIMITED IN

NATURE AND IN GOVERNMENT'S ETES ARE COMPLETELY CONSONANT
WITH ITS PRINCIPAL OF SEPARATION OF THE RACES. END SUMMARY.

2. MINISTER OF
BANTU ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT
M.C.BOTHA ANNOUNCED IN PARLIAMENT MAY 1 THAT CERTAIN
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CONCESSIONS WILL BE MADE FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S URBAN AFRICANS.

THESE INCLUDE:(A) AFRICANS WILL BE ABLE TO OBTAIN THIRTY-YEAR LEASEHOLD RIGHTS ON HOMES IN URBAN AREAS. THEY WILL BE ABLE TO BEQUEATH OR SELL THEIR HOUSES, ALTHOUGH SITE N WHICH HOUSE IS BUILT WILL REMAIN MUNICIPAL PROPERTY. (B) BLACK TRADERS WILL BE ALLOWED TO DEAL IN A WIDER RANGE OF COMMODITIES, ESTABLISH MORE THAN ONE TYPE OF BUSINESS, AND ENTER INTO PARTNERSHIPS. ((C) BLACK DOCTORS AND OTHER BLACK PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE WILL BE ABLE TO HAVE THEIR OWN CONSULTING ROOMS AND OFFICES IN BLACK RESIDENTIAL AREAS. DETAILS BY AIRGRAM.

3. CONCESSIONS ARE SEEN AS DIRECT RESULT OF DISCUSSIONS IN JANUARY BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER, BANTU ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS, AND HOMELAND LEADERS. THEY ARE AIMED AT REDUCING SOME MAJOR RESENTMENTS OF URBAN AFRICANS. BOTHA SAID BLACKS 'WHO QUALIFY' TO BE IN URBAN AREAS WOULD, UNDER SPECIFIED CONDIIONS, BE ABLE TO BUY THE RIGHT OF OCCUPATIONS OF HOUSES ON LAND DELONGING TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES. IN PRACTICE THIS WOULD MEAN A 'QUALIFIED' BLACK WOULD BE ABLE TO BUILD HIS OWN HOUSE ON AN UNDEVELOPED SITE IN A BLACK RESIDENTIAL AREA, OR ACQUIRE A HOUSE ALREADY BUILT, OR EXTEND OR ALTER HIS OWN HOUSE.

4. THOSE BLACKS WHO WERE INTERVIEWED BY JOHANNESBURG STAR HAVE APPROVED GOVERNMENT'S ACTION. FOR EXAMPLE, T.J.MAKHAYI, MAYOR OF SOWETA, SAID HE APPRECIATIVE OF WHAT HAD BEEN DONE. ONLY COMPLAINT OF MAKHAYI AND OTHERS INTERVIEWED WAS THAT CONCESSIONS HAD NOT GONE FAR ENOUGH.

5. COMMENTING TO PRESS, MRS. HELEN SUZMAN OF PROGRESSIVE PARTY SAID SHE DID NOT CARE THAT CONCESSIONS FALL WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT, BECAUSE SHE WAS SO GRATEFUL THAT CONCESSIONS HAD BEEN MADE AT ALL. SHE SAID SHE BELIEVED THEY WOULD BE WELCOMED BY URBAN AFRICANS. HOWEVER LEADER OF REFORM PARTY, HARRY SCHWARZ, SAID THAT CONCESSIONS WERE TOO LIMITED, FOR THEY FAILED TO DEAL WITH URGENT PROBLEM OF 'IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND THE SECURITY OF THE AFRICAN PEOPLE.' SCHWARZ SAID BLACK

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PEOPLE SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO OWN BOTH LAND AND BUILDINGS AND TO MORTGAGE THEM. HE ADDED THAT CONCESSIONS FOR TRADERS ALSO INADEQUATE, SINCE THERE SHOULD BE NO LIMIT ON SIZE OR NUMBER OF BUSINESSES A MAN OR COMPANY SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO OWN. WHITES, HE NOTED, ARE NOT SUBJECT TO ANY SUCH RESTRICTIONS.

6. DURING DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT, UNITED PARTY SPOKESMAN

ON RACE RELATIONS, RADCLYFFE CADMAN, SAID URBAN AFRICANS WANTED PERMANENCE AND THAT FREEHOLD OR LEASEHOLD WAS IRRELEVANT TO THE ISSUE. HE SAID ALSO THAT URBAN AFRICANS DEMANDED THE CIVIC RIGHTS THAT WENT WITH SUCH PERMANENCE. TO THIS, DEPUTY MINISTER OF BANTU DEVELOPMENT, A.J.RAUBENHEIMER, SAID THAT IF POLITICAL AND LAND OWNERSHIP RIGHTS WERE GIVEN TO URBAN AFRICANS, 'A LINE MIGHT AS WELL BE DRAWN ACROSS THE FUTURE OF THE WHITE MAN IN SOUTH AFRICA'.

7. COMMENT: CONCESSIONS OFFERED BY VORSTER GOVERNMENT REPRESENT PROGRESS IN IMPROVING RACE RELATIONS. SUCH PROGRESS IS, HOWEVER, THE KIND THAT IS PERMISSIBLE UNDER A POLICY OF SEPARATION OF THE RACES. AS SUCH IT IS LIMITED AND CAN BE REGARDED AS A MEANS TO THE END OF MAKING SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT WORK, REGARDLESS OF THE IMPRACTICALITY OF THE OVER-ALL SCHEME OR OF THE WISHES OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY.

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